



Hon. Lewis A. Kaplan  
Daniel Patrick Moynihan  
United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl St.  
New York, NY, 1007-1312

January 26, 2024

**Re: Character Reference for Mr. Sam Bankman-Fried**

Dear Judge Kaplan,

I am writing to you to provide a character reference for Mr. Sam Bankman-Fried. I hope that you will take my experience of him into consideration as you establish an appropriate sentence for his recent conviction.

I met Sam in the Bahamas in March of 2022 on his invitation to Purpose Life Sciences to discuss funding and collaboration opportunities of our work on advancing clinical trial readiness in Africa. I had previously collaborated with the leadership at PLS and was excited to join these important in-person discussions. I am the Executive Director of a research group in Johannesburg, South Africa that conducts important clinical trials of medication and behavioural interventions for health conditions affecting South Africans.

Sam's leadership on generating new funding mechanisms through which innovative ideas like new approaches to clinical research and pandemic preparedness could be channeled in more efficient ways to deliver results quicker was refreshing and welcomed. I believe he cared about maximizing this through philanthropy and that he understood the challenges and limitations to funding innovation through more traditional global health philanthropic mechanisms. He also understood the important needs of Africa and the unique hurdles we face for doing timely and efficient research of something so fast moving and evolving as a pandemic.

I believe Sam's heart was in the right place. He treated us with great respect, and his actions towards me and the others appeared to be underpinned by a wish to have a positive impact. I am sad we could not pursue the opportunity to work on the global network of low-and-

Ezintsha, a division of Wits Health Consortium at the University of the Witwatersrand  
Sunnyside Office Park, 32 Princess of Wales Terrace, Parktown 2193, Johannesburg, South Africa  
[www.ezintsha.org](http://www.ezintsha.org)

middle income countries collaborating on important, public-spirited trials on diseases needing our attention.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards



**Professor Francois Venter**

PhD, FCP, DTM&H, Dip HIV Man

Divisional Director:: Ezintsha, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

C: 083 399 1066 | E: [fventer@ezintsha.org](mailto:fventer@ezintsha.org) | [www.ezintsha.org](http://www.ezintsha.org)

